

VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT PROGRAM GRANT PROCEDURES

GRANT REQUEST APPROVED/ACCEPTING YOUR GRANT AWARD

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) approved the portion of the fire organization's grant request as listed in the grant contract. Thoroughly read the grant contract and conditions; pay particular attention to the **"Project Scope & Description of Project"** section on page 1 of the grant agreement. Your review of this portion is critical as it defines the individual category award amount approved, the total grant award amount, and any item(s) that were declared ineligible.

Return all yellow-colored documents~~signed and dated by the authorized representative~~to the VFA Grant Manager **within 10 business days** of receipt of the award letter or the Department will award your funds to the next eligible applicant. Documents that you need to return to the DNR within 10 business days include:

- The **yellow DNR copy** of the grant award.
Sign both copies of the grant agreement and mail the one marked "DNR COPY." Funds will be encumbered (set aside for your organization) when the fully signed agreement is returned to the DNR. The second copy of the grant contract, marked "YOUR COPY," is for your file. **Note!** Once you sign the grant award, you can begin your project!
- **Form DOA-6448**, Substitute W-9 Form, Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) Verification. Instructions are included for completion of this form. Correct completion of this form is important since the information provided directly impacts the preparation and delivery of your organization's reimbursement check.
- **Form AD-1047**, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions.

Mail the documents to:

VFA/FFP Grant Manager - CF/8
Wisconsin DNR
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921.

If you decide that you **do not** wish to accept the grant contract, provide written notification of your decision to the VFA/FFP Grant Manager at the address given above **within 10 business days** of receipt of the award letter. **There will be no penalty to your fire organization if this decision is made now.**

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USING YOUR GRANT FUNDS

1. After receipt of the VFA grant agreement and keeping in step with the competitive procurement process (outlined below), place orders with successful vendors. **Arrange for payment and delivery on or before April 16, 2007.**
2. **Competitive Procurement** is a must and, as a grant recipient, it is imperative that you comply with state and federal law! The enclosed "**Procurement Guide**" is a useful tool in determining the bidding method required for your purchase(s). The VFA Grant Agreement~~General Condition A.7.e. and Special Condition B.5.a.-d. also addresses this issue. Quotations (catalog pages are acceptable) and bids should be kept a part of the grant file. **NOTE:** You may be asked to provide bid documentation prior to payment authorization. Procurement guidelines can be complex so if you have any questions regarding the necessity for bids or how to conduct the bidding process, consult your organization's or municipality's local attorney. (For those fire organizations ordering from the DNR's LeMay Forestry Center, it is not necessary to follow the bidding requirements since the bidding has already been done by the State.)
3. If your fire organization requested funds for a **dry fire hydrant(s)**, go to the following DNR website to read about and download what is needed to apply:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/waterway/dryhydrants.shtml> This website provides important information, as well as a helpful publication, "**A Guide to Planning and Installing a Fire Dry Hydrant**". If you find that you are **exempt** from the permit requirements, your organization **must still apply for an exemption** (Form 3600-107~~Chapter 30 Exemption Determination Request). Final payment will not be authorized for eligible dry fire hydrant expenditures unless one of the following is received:
 - A DNR letter of exemption from submittal of the Application/Permit for Dry Hydrant Projects, **OR**
 - A DNR-approved form 3500-96, Application for Dry Hydrants, **OR**
 - A letter from the private landowner that gives permission for the dry hydrant installation on the property.**NOTE:** If you are required to complete and submit form 3500-96, Application for Dry Hydrants, write and highlight at the top of the form "**Received VFA grant from DNR for this project**" so the approval will be expedited by the DNR and you will not be charged an application fee.
4. If you plan to order equipment from the DNR's LeMay Forestry Center in Tomahawk, Wisconsin, work with your local DNR Forester/Ranger to place your order **as soon as possible**. Make sure you inform the LeMay Center staff that you have received a VFA grant. This alerts the LeMay Center staff to process your invoice in a timely manner. As pointed out earlier, for those fire organizations ordering from the DNR's LeMay Forestry Center, it is not necessary to follow the bidding requirements since the bidding has already been done by the State.

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5. The Project Sponsor is responsible for payment of the full invoice amount to the vendor from its own (fire organization) account; this may be separate from or a part of the municipal account. Payments for grant purchases may be made in the following ways:
- Write a check from the Project Sponsor's own account. If you do this, a copy of the "canceled" check (front side only) is necessary for VFA grant reimbursement.
 - Purchase a cashier's check or money order from the Project Sponsor's account. If you do this, only a copy of the cashier's check or money order is necessary for VFA grant reimbursement.
 - Use a credit card, debit card, or on-line banking from the Project Sponsor's own account. These payment methods will require additional "proof of payment" documentation~~details outlined in the "Reimbursement Process" section.



Do not pay for VFA grant purchases in the following ways. Your organization risks loss of funds if either of these payment methods is used!

- **Do not** use a third party or **personal check** to pay for VFA grant purchases, and
- **Do not** use a **personal credit card** to pay for VFA grant purchases.

CAUTION! Items for which payment has been or will be received from another federal or state financial assistance program are not eligible according to VFA program guidelines.

6. Your VFA project must be completed and the reimbursement request with accompanying documentation mailed to the DNR by April 16, 2007, unless the project period is amended (see below).

AMENDING THE GRANT AWARD PROJECT PERIOD

Changes to the project period will require approval by the Department. If for any reason a fire organization **will not be able** to complete its project and submit its reimbursement request by April 16th, a time extension request needs to be submitted to DNR on or before the end of the project period - **April 16, 2007**. Failure to meet the extension request deadline may result in a loss of grant funds.

A request form (last page) is included for your use in the event that your organization finds itself in need of a time extension. This form will assist you, as well as enable Department staff to more quickly and efficiently process your request. We recommend that you ask for a 4-month extension, which should be sufficient time for project completion.

Remember: Don't miss the April 16th deadline!!

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THE REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

The DNR will process only **one** reimbursement check so the request must be complete when it is mailed to the DNR. The DNR reimburses the Project Sponsor for 50 percent (50%) of the eligible project costs up to the maximum amount of the grant award stated in the contract. All grant eligible items must be purchased and received, all services must be rendered within the grant period as stated in the grant agreement (or as amended) to be eligible for reimbursement. To request reimbursement send the following to the VFA Grant Manager:

- A completed and signed **Form 4300-120/Forest Fire Protection (FFP) & Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant Program Reimbursement Request**. By signing, you indicate that all the bills are paid and you have received all the items you ordered. **TIP:** Whether you overspend or underspend, just record actual expenditures in the "Expenditures" column in the appropriate categories. DNR staff will conduct a final payment review, including calculations, and make any grant award adjustment as necessary.
- **Form 8700-274/Reimbursement Claim Worksheet**. List the check date, check number, vendor(s), item(s) purchased, amount, and the total expenditure for the grant project.
- **Proof of purchase**. For each purchase, a detailed invoice must be submitted ~quotes and estimates are not acceptable.
- **Proof of payment**. One of the following types of documentation must accompany the reimbursement request for each purchase:
 - Copy of cashier's check or money order
 - Copy of "canceled" check (front side only). **TIP:** A check is "canceled" when it has cleared the bank and the amount is imprinted on the bottom right-hand corner under the signature.
 - Copy of uncanceled check along with a copy of the bank statement that shows that the check was paid. Highlight the payment on the statement and cross-reference it on the Reimbursement Claim Worksheet, Form 8700-274.
 - If a Project Sponsor's **debit card** is used:
 - Copy of the bank statement that shows the debit transaction. Highlight the transaction on the statement and cross-reference it on the Reimbursement Claim Worksheet, Form 8700-274.
 - If a Project Sponsor's **"on-line banking"** is used:
 - Copy of the payment transaction provided by the bank
 - If a Project Sponsor's **credit card** is used:
 - Copy of credit card statement showing the charges for the purchase and one of the following:
 - Copy of "canceled" check showing the credit card purchase was paid **or**

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- Copy of uncanceled check along with a copy of the bank statement that shows that the check was paid. Highlight the payment on the statement and cross-reference it on the Reimbursement Claim Worksheet, Form 8700-274.

After DNR staff completes its review of the reimbursement request and authorizes payment for all eligible costs, a check will be sent based on the information supplied on the W-9 form.



Attention Early Birds! It is advantageous to complete your project as soon as you can and submit the reimbursement materials as outlined above. Like your tax return...submitting your reimbursement paperwork well before the April 16th deadline gets priority payment review. Be an early bird—get the worm and the check!

AFTER THE CHECK ARRIVES

- Notify the local DNR Forester/Ranger when the VFA grant reimbursement check arrives.
- Schedule an on-site field check conducted by the local DNR Forester/Ranger. This is an important appointment and opportunity for you and DNR staff to review the grant award process and project!
- If any one item costs \$5,000 or more, affix the sticker provided by the local DNR Forester/Ranger.
- Assist in the planning of, and participate in, local public relations opportunities.
- Review information on recordkeeping, inventory, and disposal requirements contained in the grant agreement -- General Condition A.7.f. and Special Conditions B.6., B.7., and B.8.

If you have any grant-related questions at any time, don't hesitate to contact:

Eileen Trainor, VFA Grant Manager DNR - Bureau of Community Financial Assistance 101 S. Webster St., PO Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707-7921 Telephone: 608-267-0848 Fax: 608-267-0496 E-mail: Eileen.Trainor@dnr.wi.gov	Kathy Wells, VFA Grant Assistant DNR - Bureau of Community Financial Assistance 101 S. Webster St., PO Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707-7921 Telephone: 608-266-0918 Fax: 608-267-0496 Email: Kathy.Wells@dnr.wi.gov
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Any form or enclosure referenced in this grant procedures document can also be accessed at DNR's website: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cfa/LR/VFA/grants.html>

**VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT PROGRAM
GRANT PROCEDURES**

Time extensions may be granted for those projects that cannot be completed by the project end date. A request to change the project end date must be submitted to the FFP/VFA Grant Manager on or before **April 16, 2007**. The following format has been developed to assist you in meeting this deadline. Use of it also enables Department staff to more efficiently process your request. Your initial request will be for an additional 4 months, which should allow enough time for project completion. Just fill in the Project Sponsor information, sign, and date it. Send it to the FFP/VFA Grant Manager in one of three ways:

First class mail: This is a self-mailer--fold, affix 1st class stamp, and mail

Fax (this page): 608/267-0496 -- ATTN: FFP/VFA Grant Manager

Email (using format below): Eileen.Trainor@dnr.wi.gov

Upon receipt, your request will be processed and a copy of an approved time amendment will be returned to you to be filed with your existing grant award documents.

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TIME EXTENSION REQUEST

TO: FFP/VFA Grant Manager

In order to complete our project, a 4-month time extension is requested for:

Project Sponsor Name: _____

Grant #: _____

Authorized Representative (signature)

Date

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FOR DNR USE ONLY
Time Extension Request Approved
Amended Project End Date: _____
CF Grant Mgr. Initials/Date: _____
<i>Copy to Project Sponsor & DNR Grant File</i>